

SECRETARY OF DEFENSE ROBERT S. McNAMARA  
 REMARKS AT PRESS BRIEFING (NOTES PREPARED FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY  
 DEFENSE SYLVESTER)  
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Mr. McNamara spoke for 52 minutes. It was a realistic speech in which he gave the views of the United States as to the military threats the Alliance is likely to face, at the ways NATO might meet them, at the forces member countries should make available to the Alliance, and at the funds needed to procure and support those forces. Nothing was said that in any way indicates a shift in what we have repeatedly stated to be our policy that we will use whatever weapons are required to protect the vital interests of the Alliance.

Even during the years when the West possessed a virtual nuclear monopoly, that nuclear superiority did not serve as a universal deterrent against all forms of Communist political and military aggression. Nevertheless, we in the West must maintain nuclear forces so large as to deter the first use of nuclear weapons by our opponents. But it is becoming increasingly clear that such forces by themselves will not prevent less violent acts of political and military aggression. If the Alliance's foreign policies are to rest on military power which can be used in political and military crises of less intensity than those involving the very survival of one or more of its members, then that military power must include effective non-nuclear forces and the ability to concentrate that power where it is most needed.

The Cuban experience is consistent with this view. In the Caribbean area, the United States had superior non-nuclear land, sea and air forces which were quite capable of destroying the Soviet missiles. The Soviet Union's non-nuclear forces in the area were inferior. Since the pitting of force between the United States and the Soviet Union was not over the issue of Soviet national survival, the Soviet Union was not prepared to use its nuclear power. And it had no other force it could effectively use. We Americans faced a challenge which forced us to support diplomacy with military action; in this action military and diplomatic moves were tested; there was an effort on both sides to localize the confrontation. And, perhaps, most significantly, the forces that were the cutting edge of action were the non-nuclear ones. Nuclear force was not irrelevant but it was in the background. Non-nuclear forces were our sword, our nuclear forces were our shield.

The situation in Europe is, of course, very different. Nevertheless, the confrontation in Cuba may throw light on certain of the military and political threats which NATO must be prepared to face. Should not NATO

emphasize more the cases in which its position would be gravely weakened unless we in NATO can apply effective counter-pressure with nuclear forces and emphasize less those situations of major attack in which nuclear weapons must be used? Against the latter contingencies, NATO already has very formidable deterrents indeed.

It is quite likely, of course, that the nature of the Soviet threat has changed precisely because NATO has constructed an adequate deterrent to more ambitious actions. That deterrent will be maintained and strengthened. But he felt that NATO's problems in the 1960's are qualitatively different from those of the late forties.

He referred to some of the events of the past ten years: the suppression of uprisings in East Germany, Poland, and Hungary; Soviet aid on a substantial scale to the United Arab Republic and Iraq, attempts at subversion in Africa, pressure on Berlin, and the rash but subtle move into Cuba.

He said that NATO should expect analogous indirect or direct challenges to the security of members of the Alliance to continue in the future and that inaction, or weak action, could result in a serious setback, a missed opportunity, or even disaster.

A review of these contingencies suggests, first, the conflicts most likely to occur will almost certainly begin in a non-nuclear fashion. Second, NATO or some of its members may have to take military counter-measures. Third, if we can manage local conflicts successfully against a background of increased and adequate strength, we will not have to test the remote contingencies. Fourth, our military posture should be as relevant to the likely as to the unlikely contingencies.

This is not to say that NATO should ignore the remote contingencies of nuclear or major non-nuclear attack. Quite the contrary. It takes a great deal of sense to prepare for the unlikely - especially when the lack of preparation would bring about catastrophic consequences.

He referred to his report in Athens on the nuclear posture of the Alliance, and said that this awesome capability would naturally be the decisive element in any major nuclear war. In its deterrent function it remains a necessary - but not sufficient - condition of flexibility and initiative in other realms. The United States, in recognition of these facts, has every intention of maintaining the forces that are required. Plans are also in hand to increase the choice open to the strategic forces and to permit the exercise of the greatest discrimination possible in the conduct of strategic attacks if these forces should be called into play.

U.S. programs, extending to 1968, provide, within the limits permitted by technology, timely and coordinated coverage of major strategic forces that might threaten the Alliance.

It is the view of the United States, in the light of this assessment, that Alliance expenditures in the strategic nuclear field remain adequate for the contingency of general nuclear war and its deterrence. He pointed out, however, that a basic change is taking place in the nuclear relationship between NATO and the Soviet Union. Both sides are rapidly increasing their nuclear strength. NATO is and will undoubtedly remain ahead of the benefits of this military advantage will be sharply reduced as compared with those of the 1940's and 1950's.

If military considerations alone were at issue, Mr. McNamara said, he would therefore recommend against the further commitment of Alliance resources to strategic nuclear forces but, of course, the problem is not military alone. It is political, and its political meaning is of great importance. He said that we in the United States are deeply interested in having these matters so managed that all members of the Alliance can have full confidence in the effectiveness and reliability of NATO's strategic nuclear strength. We fully recognize that this is a problem for the Alliance as a whole and that no single member of the Alliance can or should attempt to monopolize responsibility or authority.

The United States has an inescapable political, legal, and moral responsibility for the management of the awesome power which it controls. It has an equal responsibility to deal faithfully with the Alliance. In its effort to discharge this double responsibility, the United States is seeking to make progress in two major directions.

The first is the expansion of understanding, consultation, and advance planning for the handling of the strategic deterrent. We have a special duty here, and we want to do more to fulfill it. We are accelerating programs already begun for this purpose, and we are determined to search with our partners in NATO for new and stronger instruments of active consultation.

Our second effort is to explore the ways and means by which the Alliance as a whole might come to share effectively in the actual operations, manning, deployment and support of the strategic deterrent. We shall continue in the effort, and the Secretary made it very clear that in this exploration our central interest is to assist as best we can in meeting the legitimate security interests of our European partners. In great measure, necessarily, judgment on what is wanted and needed will come from our European friends, but we emphasize again our readiness to

help to the limit in exploring every one of the relevant questions of technique, deployment, control, financing, and policy - and our readiness to join with others in the necessary action to create a multilateral force.

The Secretary said that what we may need in the tactical nuclear field is a more difficult question to answer, and it is premature to suggest specific changes in our tactical nuclear programs. Because of the great strategic and tactical nuclear powers already at the disposal of NATO, there is time.

He made it perfectly clear that it is the intention of the United States to maintain and to increase the inventory of tactical nuclear weapons in Europe but he expressed doubt that such weapons are the means by which NATO can compensate for non-nuclear weaknesses.

He thought it seemed quite clear that stronger non-nuclear posture would confer large political benefits on the Alliance, and especially on its European members, by giving them a sense of freedom and initiative that primary reliance on nuclear powers does not provide.

In reviewing the prospects for a stronger non-nuclear posture, he discussed the over-all strengths of the two sides. On most over-all measures, he said that NATO worldwide has a position of some superiority in non-nuclear arms over the Warsaw Pact countries. Worldwide, it has more men under arms. It has more tactical aircraft worldwide. It has more major combat ships. In terms of basic resources that bear especially on non-nuclear strength, it has far greater industrial resources and manpower. We in NATO are superior in a wide range of technical skills and our population aggregates 490 million as against 320 million. Of course, not all of these resources are directly applicable in any particular locality on short notice. But this is true on both sides. Just as members of NATO have military interests, and forces in the Far and Middle East, so do the Soviets. In short, our problem is not resources, but the low effectiveness of many of our forces, the likelihood that the Soviets will have the military initiative, and the Soviet position of operating in a geographically more compact area.

The stationing of more U.S. forces in Europe beyond those there now would not solve these problems. The problems of deficiencies and weaknesses must be dealt with by improvements on the European side.

He then said that there remains the less welcome subject of posture. Although some shifts in the responsibility for current programs may take place over time, matters appear well in hand with respect to the posture.



strategic and technical nuclear forces. NATO has already reached a point where even large additional investment in these capabilities would buy only a small increase in over-all effectiveness. On the other hand, the marginal utility of resources spent in the non-nuclear field remains very high. We in NATO have the advantage that we have paid the heavy costs associated with forming the foundation of an acceptable non-nuclear force. Henceforward NATO will obtain greatly increased effectiveness out of every additional expenditure.

The Secretary said he had already suggested that the United States is now bearing a heavier share of NATO defense than is equitable or prudent. It was natural in the early days of NATO that the United States should carry the major load. But this year the gross national products of NATO members, exclusive of the United States, totals \$309 billion as against \$507 billion for the United States (measured at market prices). Yet the defense budgets of the NATO Europe countries total around \$15 billion as against the \$54 billion of the United States. To put the matter briefly, he thought the United States is more than doing its part. To reach rational defense goals requires that the other NATO countries make an additional effort.

Mr. McNamara said he recognized that per cent of the GNP is only a rough measure of a nation's defense contribution. Nevertheless, it is an important indicator of effort. The recent trend in NATO Europe has been to spend a declining per cent of the GNP on defense, while GNP's have been rising rapidly both in total and per capita. The average in NATO, excepting the United States, in 1956 was 6.7 per cent; in 1962 it was 6.0 per cent.

Another implication is the manpower devoted to defense. At the present time the non-United States members of NATO have on the average 1.1 per cent of their populations under arms. Some have as little as .7 per cent. If all at a lower level were to bring their manning levels at least to that of the United States, 1.5 per cent, over 1,000,000 more men would be available. He said he was not recommending increases of this magnitude, but he thought there is little doubt that such an increase would go far to transform the existing power situation in Europe. In any event, critical manpower deficiencies exist and must be filled.

He concluded by saying that, in sum, NATO has first, a need for new tools for extensive forward non-nuclear action to add to our nuclear posture, and second, the resources to bring such defenses into existence.

In the view of the United States, no single step open to NATO could so profoundly affect the strategic balance and enhance the security of

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as all, and each of us individually, as the creation of the conditions  
for effective non-nuclear defense. The Alliance has a nuclear  
shield and it must forge an effective non-nuclear shield.  
With these weapons on hand, NATO shall be better prepared to avert the  
disastrous choice between a surrender of our vital interests and the  
devastation of a nuclear war.